

Copy

Roxbury,

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Oct. 25, 1874.

Dear Mrs. Child:

I am impressively affected by the receipt of your letter, giving (what I was so anxious to obtain) the particulars of the illness and death of your beloved husband and my honored friend, and enclosing two photographs of him and one of yourself — excellent "counterfeit presentments," neither of which was previously in my possession, and all of which will be carefully preserved in my collection with others endeared to me by many tender and thrilling recollections. Accept my heartfelt sympathy and gratitude.

Having met with such a bereavement — after almost half a century of happy wedded life — it could not have been otherwise than a severe

blow to you; for, though death itself is an event to be regarded as not less beneficent in its provisions than one's advent into this "breathing world," it nevertheless sunders the dearest ties of affection and relationship, and therefore awakens the tenderest sensibilities of the soul. When you say, "No pen can describe the loneliness and desolation that I feel — it seems as if all the world had come to an end" — it is like the ingenuous utterance of youthful devotion, and evinces a love that is perennial. I am sure that his regard for you, intense and exalted at the beginning, grew more fervent and absorbing with advancing age; and was as pure, as unselfish, as noble as ever was felt by one human being for another. While it could not have been possible for him to have made a better choice, or one more fortunate

For himself, in the matter of a wife,
even if he had been allowed his
pick of womankind, I do not think
you could have wedded a man more
nobly chivalrous in spirit, more
appreciative of womanly worth, or
more alive to all the demands of
honor, justice, and truth than him-
self. Yours was indeed a true
marriage - a connection, alas! too
rare.

"Why should our joys transform to pain?
Why gentle Hyacinth's silken chain
A band of iron prove?
Beudish, 'tis strange the charmer that binds
Millions of Lands should leave their minds
At such a loose from Love!"

So wrote good Dr. Watts (good in
spite of his Larch theology) in view of
the "Ten Happy Matches" which he dis-
covered in his own day; and his
interrogations are as pertinent now

as when he uttered them.

Although suffering severely at the time from a rheumatic affection, which has crippled me quite seriously for the past year and a half, I should have got myself conveyed to Hayland, if I had received seasonable notice of the funeral, in order that I might have borne a merited tribute to Mr. Child's memory; but you have stated the reasons why no notices to distant friends were sent, and they are perfectly satisfactory. It was fortunate that so good a man as Mr. Sears was able to conduct the services.

Perhaps you do not know that when Mr. Child was editing the Massachusetts Journal in Boston in 1827, I worked for a short time in his printing-office as a journeyman, and "set up" many of his articles, for I was very expert as a compositor; and highly did I rate his ability, and admire the vigor and

dash which characterized whatever he wrote. I am not sure that he then knew anything of me personally; but it is certain that he was among the very earliest of my anti-slavery friends and co-laborers, to whom I was specially indebted for that encouragement and counsel which enabled me to go forward in the work of Emancipation. Throughout the entire struggle, there was never a moment when he ceased to remember those that were in bonds as bound with them. No one more clearly discerned the hideous features of chattel slavery, or better understood the sorcery wiles of the Slave Power, or more glowingly denounced the crime of making man the property of his fellow man, or more earnestly contended for the immediate liberation of the Lapsless bondmen than himself. His first reported speech, occupying

a portion of several numbers of The Liberator, and afterward published in pamphlet form, was made at the first Annual Meeting of the New England Anti-Slavery Society, on the 16th of January, 1833, in support of the following resolution:—

"Resolved, That the free people of color and slaves in this land of Liberty and Law have less liberty, and are less protected by law, than in any other part of the world."

It was a masterly and exhaustive analysis and exposure of the "peculiar institution", and made a very deep impression. But you know how he felt, wrote and spoke on the subject, from the beginning to the end, "in thoughts that breathed and words that burned," and what eminent service was rendered by him to the anti-slavery cause in a variety of ways; therefore I need

not extend this panegyric. Circumstances conspired to prevent his retaining that public conspicuity to which he was entitled by his vigorous intellect, his versatility of mind, his political acumen, his ardent patriotism, and his broad philanthropy; but he was enabled, by the possession of such rare faculties and powers, to make a private station the post of honor, and greatly to transcend official exaltation. How totally exempt he was from all low ambition to shine! What disgust he cherished for everything that savored of Hypocrisy or cant! How he loved the right and hated the wrong! How clear was his vision, how intrepid his action, how thoroughly disinterested his aspirations and aims! And how singularly modest he was in all that pertained to himself personally.

Dear Mrs. Child, while affectionately descending upon his sterling worth and manly independence, I cannot refrain from renewing the expression of my exalted appreciation of your character, genius, literary productions, and self-denying and untiring labors in the cause of universal emancipation, of suffering humanity in its varied aspects, of religious freedom of inquiry and dissent as against all sacerdotal assumptions, of equal rights and immunities without regard to sex, of reform and progress in their widest scope. Few have written so well and so instructively as yourself. Multitudes on both sides of the Atlantic have read your writings with profit and delight, and yours has been a conspicuous part in popular education. I honor and admire you among the very first of

your sex in any age or country.

May your life, so nobly consecrated to all good words and works, be graciously prolonged many years.

I enclose for your acceptance the latest photograph of myself, taken a few months since, and regarded as the most satisfactory of any I have yet had made. In the course of a few weeks, if my life be preferred, I shall complete my seventieth year - December 12th. The fact is an amazement to me; for in spirit I feel almost as fresh and elastic as I did when I commenced the publication of The Liberator. How imperceptibly we glide from childhood, youth, middle & life, to old age! But the law of mortality is not to be evaded, and for me "the inevitable hour" will come with gratitude to the Divine Being for the life I have here enjoyed, and with

unquestioning faith and lively
Hope as to the life to come.

My dear wife and children
desire to be most affectionately
remembered to you.

Your sympathizing and
Attached friend,

Wm. Lloyd Garrison

Mrs. L. Maria Child.